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## THE ATTITUDE OF SPAIN DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

More than four score years ago the American people, attracted by the style of Irving, their first man of letters, began to read widely in the field of Spanish history. Those who became acquainted with *Columbus* did not doubt that in the *Conquest of Granada* and the *Tales of the Alhambra* they would find equal entertainment. In this expectation they were not disappointed. But they sought something more than entertainment. They longed to learn about the people who had given to civilization a new world, who had opened to the commerce of Europe the trade of the Pacific, who had circumnavigated the globe, and who had attempted to Christianize the aborigines of two archipelagos and two continents. Moreover, they desired to know something of the national characteristics of Spaniards, who had transferred to the New World the civilization of the Old, and whose descendants were their neighbors and in the War for Independence had been their friends. But the record of Spanish achievement in America could have been examined in the pages of some dull chronicle. In a form more attractive the literary art of Irving gave to his countrymen not only glimpses of olden times in Spain but impressions of antiquity interesting to all the human race. To Americans his descriptions of Spanish life appeared to be pictures of a distant past, but they were not. They were records, more or less faithful, of the Spain that he knew. The centuries had come and gone without greatly changing the daily life or the ideals of her people. In that country of romance Irving, whose genius lay somewhere in the enchanted region between fiction and history, found themes adapted to his taste.

Ten years after the appearance of Irving's life of Columbus, Prescott, who also had been captivated by romantic Spain, published *The History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*. This added definiteness of outline to the chief incidents in the golden age of Castile, while the *Conquest of Peru*, the *Conquest of Mexico*, and *Philip II.*, a work upon which he was engaged at the time of his death, showed the rapid territorial growth of the Spanish empire and the great increase of its power. In brief, the pages of Irving and Prescott revealed for the first time to

their countrymen the outlines of an empire, perhaps the most splendid and powerful that the world had seen. Yet notwithstanding its grandeur it contained the elements of disaster and decay.

This empire, upon which the sun never set, squeezed from its subjects revenues nearly ten times as great as those of Elizabethan England. When the Virgin Queen had scarcely a battalion of regulars, the captains of Philip II. commanded a standing army of fifty thousand. Unlike other princes of modern times he held dominion of the land and of the sea, and during a part of his troubled reign was supreme on both. The air alone was free. In that element he could neither hush nor guide the tempest. At St. Quentin his soldiers inflicted on the French a decisive defeat, which they failed to improve; his Armada menaced the independence of England. In short, the power of Philip II. at one time surpassed even that of Napoleon, whose control stopped with the shore. But unlike the Emperor of France, the ruler of Spain, attached to an inherited system, was greatly lacking in originality. Besides an unequalled revenue, a victorious army, and a powerful navy Philip had merchant-ships, and commerce, and colonies. His people received and distributed the spices of the East and the treasure of the West. This superiority was well deserved, for Spain was the home of brave soldiers and renowned statesmen.

Englishmen are fond of praising the chivalrous and versatile Sidney, courtier, statesman, soldier, and poet. Indeed it is difficult to overpraise him. The England of James I. had Bacon, "the brightest, the wisest, and the meanest of mankind," and Jonson, Raleigh, and many other men of action who were also eminent men of letters. Startling as the statement may appear, in Spain such men were still more numerous. There were few Spanish men of letters who were not at the same time soldiers or statesmen. This must be the conclusion of a reader of the *History of Spanish Literature*, by George Ticknor, who belonged to the epoch of Irving and Prescott.

Not long did Spain remain at the zenith of her power. Even before the death of Philip II. there were murders, and massacres, and endless wars which wasted her substance. Time surely brought round its changes. The empire at the close of the seventeenth century was very different from what it was at the

accession of Philip II. Kingdoms and dukedoms had been lost, art had perished, and literature was about to enter upon a dead season. Such legions as were once commanded by Alva and Farnese had vanished as completely as the spectral army that besieged the walls of Prague. Their not distant successors, diminished in number, were ill paid and poorly disciplined. The royal guard, the most favored of those disorganized bands, according to Macaulay, battled daily with beggars at the doors of convents "for a porringer of broth and a morsel of bread." This wretched army was matched with a navy not less wretched. With the death of Charles III., the heroic age of the Spanish empire may be said to have come to an end. Its partition was not long delayed. During this dismemberment the rising powers came, like vultures on eager wing, to banquet on its fragments. For the present purpose it is enough to state that this amazing change was accomplished by bad government.

The Spain described by Irving, and Prescott, and Ticknor is the Spain which educated Americans know best. The succeeding epoch, when the national grandeur had departed, is much less familiar. Yet that later history is of considerable intrinsic interest. In part it explains the Anglo-American estimate of nearly everything Spanish and Spanish-American, an estimate by no means complimentary. Nevertheless, the relations between the United States and the republics of South America are becoming more friendly. This good feeling, even if a little belated, is in harmony with the facts of both American and Spanish-American history. During the Revolutionary War, Spain and her colonies assisted the people of the United States in their gallant fight for freedom. Though the nature of this assistance may be discovered in the archives of either country, there is in our historical literature no adequate treatment of this important subject.

Ten years ago, in the *Catholic University Bulletin*, the writer called attention to this and to other deficiencies in the existing accounts of the Revolutionary War.<sup>1</sup> Since that time Doctor Edler has written an excellent monograph on *The Relation of Holland to the American Revolution*. Dr. B. F. Jameson, indeed, had examined still earlier a portion of the same field. Con-

<sup>1</sup> January, 1906.

cerning the nature of French assistance there is an abundance of material. Without reading beyond Doniol and Wharton one gets not every detail, it is true, but sufficient information to form a just conclusion on the subject. In a word, the nature of French and of Dutch assistance has been adequately, if not exhaustively, treated; that of Spain, which was not insignificant, has to a great extent been neglected. While that theme cannot be fully described in the limits of an essay, its nature may be at least suggested. The present inquiry, therefore, aims at nothing more than a treatment in outline of the attitude of Spain and her colonies to the American Revolution.

Spain did not pursue a constant policy from the beginning to the end of the American Revolution. In 1776 her purpose was to assist in keeping England's colonies in a state of disaffection. To maintain this unrest she gave, June 27, 1776, to the American commissioners, through Vergennes, the sum of 1,000,000 francs.<sup>2</sup> As she was unprepared for war, this act could not prudently be proclaimed. Therefore the secret was carefully guarded by Charles III. and his minister Grimaldi. Before the transaction became known in England more than a year had passed. Though the colonies were disaffected, by Spain they were expected to remain subject to the mother country. The task of imposing peace upon them, it was hoped, would leave England no leisure to undertake aggressions on Spanish America. At the outset this principle controlled the policy of Charles III. and his minister. When the issue between England and her colonies was no longer a question of redressing grievances but of gaining independence, Spain lost interest in the insurgents, for she feared the influence on her own colonists of an example of successful revolt. During this period, therefore, she discouraged all American advances. Of the American policies adopted by Spain this was the second.

In 1779, after having been drawn into the conflict against Great Britain, the attitude of Spain suffered still another change. Participation in the widening war led her to summon up a remembrance of the past. In it she beheld wrongs to be avenged, losses to be recovered, and national greatness to be restored. Of

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<sup>2</sup> With money furnished by Spain considerable shipments of military stores for the use of Congress were subsequently made by the house of Gardoqui.

those considerations perhaps the last, the desire to become again a power of the first rank, was not the least. In executing this programme the United States would be a useful, if not an essential ally. Both the army and navy of Britain would be forced to go to America. Though the interests of Spain were bound up with those of the United States, American ministers were coldly received at the Spanish Court and in Spanish society. This feeling may in part be explained by an observation of Trevelyan, namely, that "Spaniards looked upon the people of New England as a particularly dangerous form of heretics, and disapproved of them as turbulent and disloyal colonists whose rebellion against their rightful master set a very dangerous example to the inhabitants of their own vast, immensely valuable and loosely attached dependencies in the Western Hemisphere."<sup>3</sup>

The storm of indignation that swept New England after the passage of the Quebec Act showed, indeed, that Yankees, like their Roundhead ancestors, were as intolerant as, in English opinion, were the Spaniards themselves. They looked, strangely enough, to the United States for assistance, but did not on that account manifest any excess of generosity. In fact, in this respect, the Spaniards were neither better nor worse than the New Englanders, who in Rhode Island coldly received their French allies and in Boston actually mobbed their officers.<sup>4</sup>

Neither the ministers nor the European subjects of the king of Spain cared much about the rights of American citizens. England was believed to be in a condition of distress and to Spain this extremity marked the hour for avenging former defeats. It appears, too, that there were visions of territory to be wrested from England or gained at the expense of the United States, which Spanish statesmen believed were bounded on the west by the Appalachian Mountains. This belief serves to explain her conquest on the shores of Lake Michigan, where on January 2, 1782, a Spanish force from St. Louis seized the British post of St. Joseph, took a few prisoners and raised the standard of Spain. Moreover, in her convention with France it was stipulated that the whole of Florida; also the town and the bay of Mobile, should be added to the dominions of Spain. Let it be assumed that the

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<sup>3</sup> *George Third and Charles Fox*, Vol. i, p. 184.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

motives which impelled that kingdom to declare war were vengeance and greed, forces imperious but ignoble. Yet if any power on the globe had a right to summon England to an audit, that power was Spain. In times of peace English buccaneers had destroyed her towns and year after year had plundered her treasure ships; on her troops English armies had often inflicted defeat; and finally England had interposed in her administration of the Netherlands. If retaliation was ever justified, it was for these repeated injuries.

When at last, April, 1779, Spain had concluded to enter the war, her dilatory tactics prevented the blockading of the British fleet and the annihilation of British commerce. The ships of France alone were not equal to an encounter with the navy of England, but the half-victory of Orvilliers, in the Channel, clearly showed that their combined forces were superior. Instead of improving the opportunity to assist in destroying the fleets of England, Spain had wasted the winter of 1778-1779 in a vain effort to mediate between Great Britain and her colonies. Meanwhile, in a haste that did not divide the day and night, England was strengthening herself for the struggle with the Bourbon powers. The hesitant policy of Spain before she entered the war had not been unobserved. Montmorin, the French minister in Spain, reported, June 20, 1778, that Florida Blanca, minister of foreign affairs, showed "a fresh coolness" toward the conquest of Jamaica and Gibraltar.

As a settlement of the dispute Spain proposed, in October, 1778,

1. That England acknowledge the absolute independence of the colonies.
2. That she retain Canada and Acadia.
3. That she cede to the colonies all the Floridas except what was necessary for the protection of Spanish commerce in the Gulf of Mexico.

France did not desire to see the new republic mistress of the whole continent and, therefore, Vergennes believed that exorbitant claims should not be made against England. The influence of this sentiment doubtless may be perceived in Spain's proposal. The latter feared the encroachments of the United States; but this uneasy feeling was set at rest by French statesmen, who reminded their ally that her situation would be far worse if the

colonies submitted to the mother country, for afterward there would be no resisting their united endeavors. To save the feelings of England and, no doubt, to gain some of his own ends without war the king of Spain suggested, late in 1778, a truce, which from time to time could be renewed. This would give the colonies, which were to be parties to the negotiations, ultimate independence, while the mode of procedure, it was believed, would be less humiliating to England than would be an immediate acknowledgment of independence. As the great object of the colonists was political freedom, Franklin, to whom had been confided the project of a truce, believed that the manner of granting independence was not so important. However, a committee of Congress was of opinion that the idea of a truce should not be entertained, but that during the negotiations a cessation of hostilities "may be admitted in case all the forces of the enemy shall be withdrawn from every post and place within the limits of the United States." On June 15, 1781, Congress almost unanimously agreed to the idea of Franklin, with the proviso that Great Britain was not to be left in possession of any part of the United States. Subsequently it appeared that the proposed truce was to continue twenty-five or thirty years, during which period there would be commercial intercourse between England and her colonies; also freedom of trade between them and other countries. Finally Great Britain was to treat them as independent *in fact*. This proposition of Spain was rejected as was her offer of mediation. Thereupon she withdrew her offer and recalled her minister.

As early as September 15, 1776, Beaumarchais, the brilliant and witty French dramatist, advised Congress, through its Committee of Secret Correspondence, to declare war against Portugal and promptly to send a fleet to "the Brazils." That, he stated, would interest Spain in American success, because, he philosophically added, "the enemies of our enemies are more than half our friends."<sup>5</sup> At that time England demanded of Spain the surrender of American ships in its ports and the prohibition of future intercourse with them. But Spain evaded a

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<sup>5</sup> On December 8, 1776 Franklin sent intelligence of the departure of a Spanish fleet carrying 7,000 troops, horse and foot. The expedition was believed to have been sent to attack the Portuguese colony of Brazil. In that case English troops and ships would be diverted for its defence.



compliance and on a later occasion respected the commission of an American naval officer. Still later Silas Deane reported that country as a good place of refuge for a frigate cruising in British waters. Writing March 8, 1777, from Burgos, Arthur Lee informed the Secret Committee of Congress that he had learned from an official of high rank that supplies for the Continental army would be sent from Bilboa by every opportunity. Blankets are mentioned, and there is ascribed to Spain a purpose to make at New Orleans and Havana deposits of ammunition and clothing, with directions "*to lend* them to such American vessels as may call for that purpose." At this time Lee was considering many projects, among them one to secure the services of some able Irish officers in the Spanish army. If any of those veterans could be spared, he was assured that the United States should have them. He was also assured by the government of Spain of having credit from time to time on Holland. Furthermore, it was agreed that American vessels calling at Havana were to receive the same treatment as was accorded those of France, the ally of Spain. In brief, she was willing to promote in every way the liberty of the Colonies, but could not then make an acknowledgment of their independence. It was proposed to despatch a vessel laden with salt, sail-cloth, tent-cloth, cordage, blankets, and similar warlike stores; also an assortment of drugs, In order the more easily to supply articles contraband of war, Spain favored an expedition against Pensacola. The zeal of the house of Gardoqui in American affairs was not unknown to Mr. Lee.

On December 30, 1776, Congress passed the following resolution, which on April 7, 1777, Franklin communicated to Count d'Aranda, Spain's Ambassador to the court of France.

"That if his Catholic majesty will join with the United States in a war against Great Britain, they will assist in reducing to the possession of Spain the town and harbor of Pensacola; provided the inhabitants of the United States shall have the free navigation of the Mississippi, and the use of the harbor of Pensacola; and will (provided it shall be true that his Portuguese majesty, has insultingly expelled the vessels of these States from his ports, or has confiscated any such vessels) declare war against the said king, if that measure shall be agreeable to, and supported by the courts of France and Spain."

Relative to the value of Spanish assistance suggested in the preceding pages Franklin and Deane wrote, May 25, 1777:

“The latter [Spain] has already remitted to us a large sum of money, as you will see by Mr. Lee’s letters, and continues to send cargoes of supplies, of which you have herewith sundry accounts. Many of these transactions are, by some means or other, known in England, which dares not resent them at present, but the opinion of an approaching war gains ground every day.”

On September 8, Franklin, Deane, and Lee, writing to the committee of Foreign Affairs, declared that while Spain had not yet consented to receive a minister from the United States, “she has, however, afforded the aids we formerly mentioned, and supplies of various articles have continued till lately to be sent, consigned to Mr. Gerry, much of which we hear has safely arrived.” Though Spain had not formally acknowledged, she stood with France in insisting upon American independence. In a letter written August 3, 1777, from his home at Braintree, John Adams stated that it was generally believed Spain had decided against England though she had not the same motives as France for taking up the defence of the colonies. Reference is made by Arthur Lee to the assembling off Finisterre, July 26, 1779, of a united French and Spanish fleet of fifty vessels, thirty French and twenty Spanish. This armament—commanded by Orvilliers—was attended by a separate Spanish squadron of sixteen ships commanded by Don Córdoba and acting as a *corps de réserve*. Don Ulloa was reported cruising off the Canaries with four ships of the line, while six more blockaded the Bay of Gibraltar, where from the land a Spanish army invested the town. As late as August 24 adverse winds had prevented the sailing of the united fleet. The Spanish ambassador quitted London, June 18, 1779, for Paris. The forces of his country were already on the march to join those of France. On the tenth of September, 1779, Congress was considering a joint expedition with Spain against the Floridas; also the guarantee to her of those provinces, provided she could gain them from England by cession or win them in war. In return the United States asked the free navigation of the Mississippi River into and from the sea; also that Spain pay annually to them a named sum during the war and for a certain term of years.

The idea of a subsidy is explained in the instructions to John Jay, who was appointed September 27, 1779, minister plenipotentiary to negotiate with Spain relative to the free navigation

of the lower Mississippi, and the formation of a treaty of alliance and of amity and commerce. These instructions further declare:

"The distressed state of our finances and the great depreciation of our paper money inclined Congress to hope that his Catholic majesty, if he shall conclude a treaty with these States, will be induced to lend them money. You are therefore to represent to him the great distress of these States on that account, to solicit a loan of \$5,000,000 upon the best terms in your power, not exceeding 6 per centum per annum, effectually to enable them to coöperate with the allies against the common enemy; but before you make any propositions to his Catholic majesty for a loan you are to endeavor to obtain a subsidy in consideration of the guarantee aforesaid."

By February, 1780, the Spanish government had concluded that Jay might be informally received. In the course of the following month there were put on board the transports at Cadiz 6,600 troops. Two squadrons commanded by D. Solano and D. Tomasco, in all thirteen warships, the first provisioned for five months, the second for four and one-half were to accompany them. The organizations destined for this expedition were filled up with soldiers from the regiment of Hibernia. Florida Blanca, minister of foreign affairs, could not communicate with Jay so confidentially as he wished to do because of his lack of knowledge of the English language. The subsequent diplomatic history of the United States shows that the hint was ignored. Spain, he explained, at much expense supported in the ports of France thirty-five ships of the line and frigates; she had sold supplies for half price; she had money in America, but could not then avail herself of it. Late in 1780 or at the beginning of the next year he would be able, however, to advance to the United States "twenty-five, thirty, or forty thousand pounds sterling; and in the meantime, should these bills be presented for payment, he would take such measures as would satisfy the owners of them." The navigation of the lower Mississippi, for a long time insisted upon by the United States, appears to have been the chief obstacle to the formation of a treaty with Spain. That country, says Jay, is in "darkness about us . . . they scarcely believe that the Roman Catholic religion was even tolerated there." That is, in the Colonies. To him Spaniards appeared "to like the English, hate the French, and to have prejudices against Americans." In this rapid survey of Spain's fluctuating

policies during the Revolution one clearly perceives on the part of her statesmen a singular lack of foresight in managing their foreign affairs, an indecision that was fatal, and everywhere unmistakable evidences of national poverty. For these reasons she suffered to pass without improving a rare opportunity to impair the power of England. In the circumstances she could have turned her brave and enterprising neighbors into friends, but instead of pursuing so wise a policy she adopted a conduct so variable as to efface from the minds of Americans any sense of gratitude for the considerable assistance which in reality she had given. Among Spaniards there is a clear tradition that they contributed toward American independence. The nature of this service has in part been indicated, but what was of far greater value to the United States than these European courtesies was the achievement of Spanish officials in America.

In a communication of John Jay occurs this interesting paragraph: "The family of Galvez is numerous and of weight. The one on the Mississippi has written favorably of the Americans to his brothers here, three of whom are in office. It would be well to cultivate this disposition whenever opportunities of doing if offer." An uncle of the Louisiana Colonel was president of the Council of the Indies, perhaps, after the king himself, the highest official in Spain; his father was viceroy of Mexico.

It has been stated that on April 12, 1779, France and Spain had formed a secret convention, which was in fact a treaty of alliance for the joint conduct of a war against England. In due time the New World received tidings of this important event. Of special interest was this news to Don Bernardo de Galvez, whose work, as will appear, was the most striking of Spain's successes in the American phase of her war with England. So important, indeed, was it that it was a cause of alarm to Congress, for it tended to make of the Mexican Gulf a Spanish lake, long a cherished object of Spanish sovereigns.

Though the armies of Great Britain occupied important posts such as New York and Charleston, one by one the colonies had slipped from her grasp. Of them all she retained in 1779 only Canada and the Floridas. Of the latter region Peter Chester was governor, while Gen. Campbell, with headquarters in Pensacola, commanded the troops of the province. Of these the military head had not a very high opinion. The seven companies

of veterans forming his sixteenth regiment, he stated in a letter to Sir Henry Clinton, had been almost worn out in the service, yet they were his only reliable soldiers; the sixtieth was made up of Germans, chiefly Waldeckers, of condemned criminals, and "other species of gaol-birds." Still more unfit General Campbell deemed the provincial troops. Lieut. Col. Dickson, who had 500 men on the Mississippi, so pressed Campbell for reinforcements that the grenadiers from Waldeck and other troops were sent to his assistance. In addition to the units described there were at Mobile under Capt. Durnford, Pennsylvania and Maryland Loyalists. There was likewise a horde of Indians attracted doubtless by the offer of three pounds sterling for every hostile scalp. So well employed by the squadrons mentioned was the navy of England that the necessary transports could not be spared to convey from New York a fine regiment of American Tories. The essential conditions of disaster were assembled, and there was at hand a soldier of sufficient penetration to perceive the weak joint in his enemy's armor.

On the first of February, 1777, Col. Galvez, but twenty-one years old, entered on the duties of his office as acting Governor of Louisiana. Without delay he reported to his sovereign the nature of the fortifications of Mobile and Pensacola. As yet Spain had not declared war against England. Her colonists, however, from the beginning of the American struggle for freedom gave both sympathy and support to the people of the United States. From the moment that Galvez assumed office, Oliver Pollock began regularly to send to the United States supplies from New Orleans. Though Galvez was restrained from acts of war by the Spanish Court, he assisted the Americans with money to the extent of \$72,000 so that they could maintain their hold in Kentucky. In the year 1777 one Oliver Pollock, a representative of Congress, and a patriot destined to promote in no small degree the interests of his adopted country, began to collect military supplies and to arrange for their shipment to Fort Pitt. Before indicating the nature of his services it may be well briefly to sketch the activity of his companion, James Willing, a Captain in the Continental army, and properly described as an adventurer of gentlemanly appearance but brutal instincts.<sup>6</sup> The latter

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<sup>6</sup> HENRY E. CHAMBERS, *West Florida and Its Relation to the Historical Cartography of the United States*, p. 21.

went amongst the British settlers in Louisiana urging them to enter upon a course of rebellion. In homes at Baton Rouge, Natchez, and other points he was hospitably entertained. His hosts did not dream that he was even then planning their destruction. Nor was any suspicion aroused by his subsequent departure for Pennsylvania. There his representations persuaded Congress, then in session at Lancaster, that the neutrality of West Florida was of the first importance to the American cause, for it would not only remove an enemy from the rear but permit on the Mississippi the free passage of munitions. From Congress he appears easily to have obtained authority to confirm the neutrality of the inhabitants.

Returning to Natchez in the course of the following year, Willing and his armed followers, partly recruited in New Orleans, prevailed upon many to take an oath of neutrality. Then upon one pretence or another he began a career of burning, confiscation, and cruelty. Those homes in which he had formerly been favored are said to have suffered most. Many of the plundered and houseless people fled across the Mississippi, where they found a refuge among strangers. But for Willing's wanton, cruel, and unprovoked conduct toward a helpless community, West Florida might have been won over to the American cause. Around the ruined homes of Natchez there was destitution and despair. To the conduct of Willing, Galvez had a two-fold objection. In the first place, the adventurer's sinister activity had been directed against peaceful neutrals whose sympathy for the American cause was known. This would have displeased the Spaniard, who, as will appear, was a brave and chivalrous soldier. Then, too, Willing had taken Fort Manchac, an act which interfered with the ultimate object of Galvez himself. If the brutal American caused Galvez anxiety, the presence in New Orleans of two French commissioners did not diminish his uneasiness, because the thought of a possible attempt of France to force a recession of Louisiana was clearly indicated in the correspondence between them and their home government. With characteristic energy and statesmanship Galvez immediately began to popularize Spanish rule. Local trade was freed from former restraints, commerce was assisted, and emigration from Spain was encouraged. But books likely to influence the colonists against that country were not received.

The presence in New Orleans of Oliver Pollock has been noticed. But in addition there were other American merchants, from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, industriously engaged in obtaining military supplies, especially ammunition, which by way of the Mississippi and the Ohio they shipped to Fort Pitt, whence boats were regularly sent to New Orleans for additional consignments. In this traffic the people of Louisiana cheerfully participated because of their sympathy for the Americans. Moreover, from the outset officials because of the attitude of Spain were encouraged to assist. This friendship of Spanish-Americans led to some correspondence between Galvez and Col. George Morgan, stationed at Fort Pitt. In this exchange of opinion was suggested a joint attack upon the British forts in Florida. But Galvez, who had marked that province for his own, did not favor the appearance within his territory of an American army. In June, 1779, Spain declared war against Great Britain. This act suggested to Englishmen the necessity of reducing the Spanish posts in the Mississippi Valley. This would both cut off the abundant military supplies which flowed from New Orleans and completely flank their rebellious subjects. Gen. Haldimand, commanding in Canada, had been ordered to execute the plan. Ultimately its conduct devolved upon Lieut. Gov. Sinclair, of Michilimackinac, and Gen. Campbell, who was stationed at Pensacola. The former ordered a party of Sioux to descend the river to Natchez, while other bands were directed "to amuse Col. Clarke at the falls of the Ohio" and prevent his interference with the British conquest of St. Louis and the other Spanish posts in the Valley. To carry out his part of the programme Gen. Campbell was expected to take a fleet and an army up the Mississippi, capture New Orleans, and at Natchez effect a junction with Sinclair's Indians. The latter force was formidable and doubtless would have proved too strong for even Clark's redoubtable fighters if an unexpected blow had not been struck at these well-laid British plans. From intercepted letters Galvez had learned the details of the British plan as early as had Sinclair himself. Favoring an attack on the British posts on the Mississippi, Galvez submitted his plans to a council of war, which declined to approve them; a second effort to gain its consent met the same fate. The council favored only defensive measures. We have seen that war had been declared by Spain in June,

1779. So zealously had Galvez labored that by August following he had many boats in readiness. But these, with houses, cattle, and crops, which were destroyed, were battered to pieces by a hurricane that swept the Valley. Only one frigate escaped destruction. The young commander wasted not an hour in railing at fate, but at once began to assemble another fleet.

Fortune, whose frowns Col. Galvez had known, soon revealed to him a countenance less harsh. Hitherto he had not been governor of Louisiana, but was merely serving *ad interim*. At this time his commission had been received, but for reasons of his own he did not then make known his appointment. His officers scoured the country for boats that had escaped the hurricane; several of his sunken ships were raised and converted into gunboats. When his preparations were well advanced, he called a public meeting, read to the assembled people his commission, and informed them of the impending British attack. He declared that he could not accept the high office to which he had been appointed unless he felt assured of their support. His appeal, made at the moment when their patriotism was aroused, met with an enthusiastic response and amid their cheering and shouts of loyalty he took the oath of office. Notwithstanding the hurricane, by August 27 the ardent commander had ready for duty 670 men, of whom 170 were regular soldiers. After setting out he was joined by 160 Indians and 600 volunteers from the parishes. Thus, Col. Galvez, eager to strike, found himself at the head of nearly 1,500 men, one of whom was the American merchant, Oliver Pollock, the energetic collector and shipper of supplies to the Colonies. The little army captured without opposition a small garrison at Manchac and at once pushed on to Baton Rouge. At this stage Galvez received some reinforcements under Grandpré, who himself had won some minor engagements. Baton Rouge was guarded by a wall and moat and defended by 500 troops, mostly regulars. So skillfully did Galvez bestow his batteries that after a brisk bombardment Lieut. Col. Dickson was forced to surrender. His bravery secured for him the honors of war. This capitulation comprised also that of Fort Panmure at Natchez. Meanwhile the Spanish fleet had captured in adjacent waters eight small British vessels. Despite his brilliant success Galvez found himself greatly embarrassed. In the three forts that had fallen he took 560 prisoners, many



militia and negroes. Not having enough men to guard his captives, he was compelled at once to dismiss many. Moreover, after leaving garrisons at the forts, he had but fifty regulars for the defence of New Orleans and the control of the great number of paroled prisoners who roamed its streets. Attracted by the news of war numbers of Indians, too, entered the city or pitched their tents without. By October, however, reinforcements arrived from Havana. Galvez and Gonzales, his second in command, were promoted to the rank of brigadier general, the subaltern and the soldiers were praised, while their conquest was celebrated in verse.

On the programme of Gen. Galvez, Mobile came next, but he had no thought of making an immediate attack. The winter of 1779-1780 he spent in New Orleans perfecting his preparations. Tidings of the fall of the British forts on the Mississippi were received in Mobile in October, 1779. When this intelligence reached Gen. Campbell at Pensacola, he refused to trust the tale. It was merely a ruse to draw him from his post. The details brought a few weeks later by a second courier found him still incredulous.

Mobile, garrisoned by engineers, foot, artillery, Pennsylvania and Maryland Tories, volunteers from the town, and a score of artificers, was commanded by Capt. Durnford, a brave and efficient officer. On February 5, 1780, Gen. Galvez with a fleet carrying 2,000 soldiers made up of regulars, militia and some companies of free negroes sailed for Mobile. The winds, which in the past have always watched the navies of Spain, were again aroused. Several of the General's ships were stranded and much of his provisions and ammunition damaged by a squall. But despite the elements he had won success on the Mississippi. He was prepared for a new trial with fate and again he was rewarded by success. After taking an armed provision ship, he finally made a landing. As at Baton Rouge, Galvez carefully located his batteries and began a heavy cannonade. On March 1 he sent to Capt. Durnford a polite note in French requesting a surrender of the Fort. In answer he received a soldierly and complimentary response. The British commander offered to permit the departure of those who were afraid to support him, but no one cared to take advantage of his offer, and amidst cheers they resumed the defence. At last a breach had been made in

their walls and on March 14 the garrison surrendered on the same terms as had been granted to Lieut. Col. Dickson. Hunger greatly hastened the fall of Mobile. With reinforcements amounting to 522 men Gen. Campbell was marching to its relief. Arriving too late, he was forced to retrace through the swamps around the Gulf his difficult way back to Pensacola.

Galvez used Mobile as a base of operations against Pensacola, but, as was his custom, deliberately prepared for his final campaign. A year was spent in organizing his forces. In the meantime General Campbell was fully aroused. His activity was first shown by sending, January 3, 1781, an expedition against the Spaniards who occupied entrenchments at the French village below the point where the Tensaw flows into Mobile Bay. His force, consisting of infantrymen, cavalry, a party of 300 Indians, and sixty Waldeckers, commanded by Capt. Von Hanxleden, several times assaulted the entrenchments of the Spaniards, but were finally driven off. A German witness notices the courage and the chivalry of the Spaniards, "who duly honored the bravery of the fallen."<sup>7</sup> In this engagement both sides suffered severely.

While Campbell was making the best disposition of his small army of regulars, volunteers, and Indians, Galvez was importuning Havana for reinforcements and was answered by promises. To make sure of assistance he went thither himself and raised a considerable force which was completely disabled by a storm. He then organized a still stronger expedition, which he brought off the harbor of Pensacola. His naval allies feared to pass the forts, whereupon he shamed them into an effort by running in a small schooner past the batteries, recklessly exposing himself to their fire. He laid siege to Pensacola in March, 1781, and after experiences similar to those that marked his Mobile campaign forced the brave but unenterprising General Campbell to capitulate in the following May. With a considerable army General Galvez now retained for King Charles the two Floridas.

The fame of Galvez's first campaign extended far up the Mississippi, and it is believed to have driven from St. Louis a band of 1,500 Indians and 140 Englishmen commanded by Wabasha, a Sioux chief, who besieged the post on May 26, 1780. Col. George Rogers Clark, who had entered the Illinois country in 1778, was

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<sup>7</sup> For an account of the Mobile campaign see VON ELKING, *Die Deutschen Hülfsstruppen in nordamerikanischen Befreiungskriege* [passim].

within easy call of St. Louis. The sudden appearance and the equally abrupt disappearance of Chief Wabasha is understood when we remember that his undertaking was but one part of a large plan. Its execution had been interrupted by the genius of Galvez, who drove the British out of the Mississippi Valley. Furthermore, the Illinois country, practically abandoned by Congress, was saved from invasion, and the States were guaranteed against attack on their western frontier. In concluding his careful treatment of this subject, Phelps says: "Such, in brief, was the highly important part which the Spaniards of Louisiana played in the American Revolution. Galvez's successes made it possible for the new country to hold its territory intact from Canada to Florida, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Had the English expedition succeeded, Great Britain could have set up a claim to this territory when the western boundary was fixed several years later at the declaration of peace. In view of their actual development, it is impossible to predict what would have been the future of the United States without access to the Mississippi Valley, and two foreign nations upon their western border to confine them between the Alleghanies and the Atlantic."<sup>8</sup>

The English had likewise been expelled from Campeachy. But they yielded nothing without a struggle. In 1780 they made an attack upon San Juan, a Spanish stronghold on the coast of Nicaragua. Writing of this expedition Horace Walpole says that it had been "so totally destroyed by climate that not a single man is left alive. The officers to the number of twenty-five are all dead, too. My pen revolts at such horrors." Though the case was not quite so bad as the English statesman believed, it was bad enough, for, by the end of September, 1780, out of 1,400 men all but 320 had died and half the survivors had been at death's door. The British had reduced the fort to ruins, but were compelled by an unhealthy climate to withdraw with the losses stated. In Europe, Minorca was promptly captured by a Spanish expedition, but Gibraltar, though hard pressed, escaped a similar fate.

Primarily, Spain was intent on her own welfare, but, for the moment, her interests were bound up with those of England's colonies. Both in Europe and America she gave employment to

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<sup>8</sup> *Louisiana* (American Commonwealths), p. 148.

the ships and the soldiers of Great Britain, while her colonists in the New World as well as her subjects at home furnished large quantities of military supplies. Those who desire to know more exactly the extent of this service may learn from the papers of Oliver Pollock, which have enjoyed a protracted repose in the Library of Congress.

CHARLES H. MCCARTHY.

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NOTE.—Owing to stress of space in the present issue, the continuation of the RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP CORRIGAN's article on the *Episcopal Succession in the United States* is held over to the next number.